

FREDERICK ALBERT COOK

The Major Expeditions

A Brief Summary

by
Sheldon Cook-Dorough

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DR. FREDERICK A. COOK IN 1907 SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE ON HIS
LAST ARCTIC EXPEDITION (1907-1909) WHICH RESULTED IN HIS DISCOVERY OF
THE NORTH POLE.

PHOTOGRAPH FROM "RETURN FROM THE POLE" BY DR. FREDERICK A. COOK,
PELLEGRINI & CUDAHY, 1951. BY PERMISSION OF DR. COOK'S
GRANDDAUGHTER, JANET COOK VETTER.

FREDERICK ALBERT COOK

(1865-1940)

THE MAJOR EXPEDITIONS

A BRIEF SUMMARY

Frederick Albert Cook was born on June 10, 1865 in the remote village of Hortonville, in Sullivan County, New York, deep in the westernmost reaches of the Catskill Mountains. His father, Dr. Theodore A. Koch, and his mother, Magdalena Lang, had both emigrated from their native Germany to New York, he from Hanover in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1848, and she with her parents, from Frankfurt am Main.

Dr. Koch had received his medical degree in Hanover. Frederick Albert Cook's maternal grandfather, Frederick Lang, had first settled in New York City and had become a successful cigar manufacturer there before moving to Sullivan County. Dr. Koch and Magdalena Lang had met in Sullivan County, New York and had been married there in the village of Jeffersonville. Frederick was one of four children of this union who reached adulthood, the others being his older brothers, Theodore and William, and his sister, Lillian. A brother, Augustus, apparently died in childhood. In 1865, shortly before Frederick's birth, Dr. Koch Anglicized the spelling of his surname to its English equivalent: Cook. His mother's family also Anglicized the spelling of their family name to its English equivalent: Long. Representatives of the Cook and Long families from whom Frederick Albert Cook sprang may be found in Sullivan County to this day.

Frederick's father died when the child was only five years of age, and the entire burden of raising the children fell upon their mother. The family lived in Hortonville until Frederick was 13 years of age when they moved to Port Jervis, New York, in search of opportunities for more remunerative employment for the boys. The next year, with the same motive, Magdalena and her brood moved to Brooklyn, New York and settled permanently there.

Frederick attended public school in Brooklyn and worked long hours at various jobs in order to help support his family. He entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University in 1887 and graduated from New York University Medical School in 1890, having earned the degree of Doctor of Medicine. In 1891, he became deeply interested in the subject of Arctic and Antarctic exploration and found himself spending all of his spare time engrossed in reading accounts of the great Arctic expeditions of exploration. He became thoroughly fascinated by the thought of the Arctic--its vast plains of ice and snow, its desolation, remoteness and bitter cold, its frozen seas, and the danger implicit in its attempted conquest. It was at this time that he answered an advertisement for a surgeon for a coming expedition to northern Greenland which had been placed by Robert Edwin Peary, its organizer and leader. Cook volunteered his services, and Peary accepted him as a member of his First North Greenland Expedition, appointing him surgeon and ethnologist of the expedition. Thus began Cook's career in Polar exploration, a career which was to span 18 years, ending with his return from his North Pole expedition in 1909.

Dr. Frederick A. Cook led or participated in four major expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic and two to sub-Arctic Alaska. These expeditions were as follows:

1. Peary's First North Greenland Expedition (1891-92). Cook served as surgeon, ethnologist, and photographer. His performance was outstanding, so much so that Peary asked him, in 1892, to accompany him on his Second Expedition projected for the following year. Peary himself, upon his return from Greenland, attested to Cook's ingenuity, presence of mind, and resourcefulness. Perhaps Cook's greatest achievement on this expedition was his ethnological work among the primitive North Greenland Eskimos. In its depth and extent, it was extraordinary. He made a study of the Eskimo language, compiled an Eskimo-English dictionary, undertook a careful examination of Eskimo customs and mores, and completed a thorough and exhaustive investigation of the physical characteristics of the Eskimos, including physical measurements and photographs of many Eskimos, male and female. As a medical doctor, he was peculiarly fitted for this task, and he made many observations of a purely medical type. His ethnological work on this expedition is of the greatest value and is being sought out and studied at the present date by ethnologists, anthropologists, and medical doctors. Dr. Cook's anthropological studies of the North Greenland Eskimos are very highly regarded, even prized, today by anthropologists because they were made with a real under-

standing of the subject matter and in such exhaustive detail and also because they were undertaken around the turn of the century (between 1891 and 1909), before the Polar Eskimos had been much affected by the customs of the White Man.

2. The Belgian Antarctic Expedition (1897-1899). This expedition was one of the most important ever to go to the Antarctic and compiled a record of accomplishment which has rarely, if ever, been surpassed, so far as scientific results are concerned. Cook was its surgeon, ethnologist, and photographer. The evidence regarding his extraordinary accomplishments on this expedition is overwhelming and indisputable. The great Roald Amundsen, who served as first mate of the expedition's ship, Belgica, learned his craft as a Polar explorer from Frederick Albert Cook, and forever after referred to him as a genius in exploration and the "finest traveller I ever knew." Cook returned the hero of the expedition; his almost incredible resourcefulness, his extensive knowledge of Polar conditions, and his optimism and equanimity in critical situations fraught with great danger saved the members of this expedition from perishing in the Polar wastes: Cook devised the means of bringing the expedition ship out of seemingly hopeless imprisonment in the Antarctic ice to open water and thence safely home. He was knighted by the King of the Belgians for his brilliance and service and was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society of Belgium in recognition of his contributions to geographical knowledge. Adrien De Gerlache, commander of the expedition, George LeCointe, captain of the Belgica, and Amundsen, first mate, all regarded Cook as the leading figure of the expedition. Aside from his remarkable ability and his courage, his outstanding trait was modesty. In the book which details the work of the expedition, Through the First Antarctic Night, written by Cook at the request of the Belgian Royal Commission on the Belgica expedition, one will find no dilation upon his own heroic deeds; they are hardly mentioned. His true role was brought out by others: De Gerlache, Le Cointe and Amundsen, later Discoverer of the South Pole in 1911.

The Belgian Antarctic Expedition was the first to endure an Antarctic Winter with its many weeks of utter darkness and bitter cold. Cook's insight into Polar condition, his extraordinary ability as an explorer and his medical and scientific knowledge enabled him to meet and overcome the formidable challenges presented to the lives of the members of the expedition. In the midst of the darkness of the South Polar Winter, when the fortunes of the expedition were at their lowest ebb, the ship, the Belgica, imprisoned in the ice and his companions paralyzed by deep depression, melancholia and Polar anemia, Cook assumed de facto command. His decisive leadership, unruffled presence of mind, ingenuity and inspiring example invigorated and resuscitated the expedition, enabled its work to go forward, and brought it out of the frozen Antarctic with a record of accomplishment in the gathering of scientific data unrivalled up to that time in the South Polar region. Scurvy presented one of the major threats to the lives of the members of the expedition and to the accomplishment of the major purpose of the expedition itself: the gathering of significant data concerning natural conditions in the Antarctic--meteorological, oceanographical, glaciological, climatic, and magnetic information of the first importance. In order to overcome this danger and to provide a food supply which would sustain the expedition for a much longer period of time than it had been anticipated it would be in the Antarctic, Cook organized and led hunting parties over the Antarctic pack who brought back the penguin and seal which he knew to be essential to combat this disease. He insisted that his companions adopt a diet rich in seal and penguin meat, over their protests, and thus largely conquered the effects of scurvy.

Another peril to the lives of his colleagues and the achievement of the scientific objectives of the expedition was presented by a condition which Cook entitled "Polar anemia". With the advent of the South Polar Winter, the sun disappeared, and the physical and mental condition of all members of the expedition rapidly deteriorated. Heart beat slowed radically and became irregular, complexions became pallid, and a deep lethargy and permanent exhaustion afflicted everyone on board the Belgica. These symptoms were accompanied by a profound melancholy and despondency which affected the entire company; in most cases, the depression felt was so severe that both the will and the mental faculties were utterly paralyzed. During this desperate Winter, when virtually all his companions were incapacitated with the deadly effects of Polar anemia, Cook maintained his composure, power of clear and penetrating thought and constructive optimistic outlook. Analyzing Polar anemia, which affected him as well as all others on the Belgica, he concluded that the slow and irregular heart beat and pulse, pallid complexion, deathly exhaustion and the resultant seriously depressed mental condition were the results of the total lack of light and heat from the now vanished sun. The sun's rays, he decided, provided the necessary impetus for the proper operation of the bodily mechanism. It occurred to his thoughtful and innovative mind that the rays of heat and light from an open fire might provide a substitute, at least in part, for the missing rays of the sun. He built a fire in the stove in his cabin and, beginning with De Gerlache, he required that each of his companions as well as himself be exposed to the effects of the fire from a close but safe distance. The beneficial effects were dramatic and

prompt. There was an almost immediate radical improvement in heart beat, pulse, breathing and mental attitude. Lethargy and depression began to lessen and almost disappeared over a period of days. Energy and hope returned. The members of the expedition were soon able to resume their accustomed duties and De Gerlache was enabled to shoulder active responsibility again. Le Cointe, who in deep depression and paralysis from the effects of scurvy and Polar anemia, had written his will and retired to his bed to die, recovered after a few days of Dr. Cook's "baking treatment" before the fire and a diet of seal and penguin and returned to his duties as master of the Belgica.

During the entire course of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition, but particularly during the terrible Winter of 1898, Cook was the epitome of ingenuity, innovation, and equanimity while at the same time displaying unwearied kindness and attention to his patients--the entire complement of the expedition. When not occupied with devising the means for extricating the Belgica from imprisonment in the ice, treating the effects of Polar anemia and scurvy in his companions, and hunting seal and penguin over the pack, Cook designed and built sledges of a new and efficient design and, with the interested Amundsen, experimented with them over the Antarctic pack. These sledges were the prototypes of those used by Cook in his conquest of the North Pole ten years later.

As ethnologist of the expedition, Cook made a valuable contribution to the science of anthropology with his studies of the primitive Indian tribes in Tierra del Fuego, the Onas and the Yahgans. Both tribes were extremely backward and diminishing in numbers and anthropological information, both physical and social, concerning them was of considerable importance to science. During the weeks that the Belgian expedition was in Tierra del Fuego and its vicinity, proceeding southward towards the Antarctic, Cook went out among the Onas, studied their tribal customs and traditions, heard and transcribed their legends and folklore, compiled extensive notes concerning the physical characteristics of these people and took numerous photographs, and examined the basic structure and characteristics of their language. His ethnological efforts were devoted primarily to the Ona Indians and he wrote a report on this tribe which is incorporated in his book, Through The First Antarctic Night, which was published in 1900. His study of the Onas was regarded as a very significant addition to the literature on the physical characteristics and culture of primitive peoples and was an important result of the Belgian expedition.

Cook was also interested in the Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego and was instrumental in securing the consent of the Belgian Royal Commission on the Belgian Antarctic Expedition to publish Thomas Bridges' Dictionary and Grammar of the Yahgan language at Belgian expense. Cook, while in Tierra de Fuego, had met Thomas Bridges, an English missionary and rancher who had lived on the Argentine portion of this island at the southern tip of South America for more than 30 years and had made the Yahgans and their language the special object of his attention and his labors. Bridges showed Cook the Yahgan Dictionary and Grammar which he had carefully gathered, organized, and set down over a period of thirty years; Cook immediately realized its importance to science and to the study of languages. He promised Thomas Bridges that he would attempt to secure its publication. On the Belgian expedition's return from the Antarctic, Bridges' son, Lucas, entrusted the Dictionary and Grammar to Dr. Cook. Cook did precisely as he had promised Thomas Bridges he would do: he sponsored the publication of the Dictionary and Grammar by the Belgians. This involved not merely convincing the Belgians to print the work at their own expense as a result of the expedition but also entailed a year's labor by Cook himself in putting the Yahgan words in a new and more readily understood orthography. After having done so, Cook sent Bridges' Dictionary and Grammar to the Belgian Royal Commission for publication with an Introduction which emphasized Bridges' authorship and his own limited role. With his work on the Onas and his re-setting of Bridges' volume on the Yahgan language and successful sponsorship of its publication, Cook made a most valuable contribution to anthropology and to the preservation of the record of a primitive language.

The great Roald Amundsen, whose performance on this expedition was itself outstanding, did not exaggerate when many years later he observed that the success of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition was due to Frederick Albert Cook.¹

3. Cook was second-in-command of the Peary Relief Expedition of 1901. This particular episode is typical of the character of the man. Peary was thought to be lost in the Arctic wastes in 1901; he had not been heard from at the Peary Arctic Club in New York for many, many months. Desperately worried, the Club in New York organized an expedition to find Peary and bring him to safety. Bridgman, the Secretary of the Club, sought Cook to join the expedition -- Cook, the hero of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition and a member of the North Greenland expedition of 1891-1892, known for his remarkable ability as an explorer and as a physician; in fact, Cook was almost certainly wanted as the real leader of the expedition because Bridgman was not a serious explorer. Cook had other plans for the Summer of 1901; he was practicing

medicine in Brooklyn and he wanted to remain among his patients that year. But he answered Bridgman's pleas and agreed to go North for humanitarian reasons -- Peary was thought to be lost and he would almost certainly need medical attention. And Cook paid his own expenses! As it happened, Peary was not lost, but was sick aboard his ship the Windward, in Smith Sound. Cook examined him, found him a victim of pernicious anemia, administered medical treatment and urged his immediate return to the United States. While in North Greenland on this short expedition, Dr. Cook continued his ethnological and medical studies of the North Greenland Eskimos.

4. First Mt. McKinley Expedition (1903). Dr. Cook organized and led his first expedition to Mt. McKinley in 1903. His primary purpose was to climb the mountain to its summit. In this he failed but he explored thousands of square miles in the vicinity of Mt. McKinley and climbed the mountain to an elevation of 11,000 feet on its northwestern side, the record for the time. Most impressive of all, he circumnavigated the giant uplift of Mt. McKinley, climbing mountain ridges and glaciers, fording glacial streams and rivers and rafting down the Chulitna River at the close of the climbing and exploration season to complete his circuit of the mountain. This feat has never been duplicated. Alfred Brooks, the distinguished Chief of the Alaskan Division, United States Geological Survey, assessed Dr. Cook's circumnavigation of Mt. McKinley as being of great significance, almost as important as scaling the mountain to its summit. The facts relating to Cook's achievement on this 1903 expedition are clear and conceded on all sides.

5. Second Mt. McKinley Expedition (1906). The primary purpose of this expedition was, again, to climb to the summit of Mt. McKinley. After several unsuccessful attempts in June and July of 1906, Dr. Cook claimed to have reached the summit on September 16, 1906, via the Ruth Glacier, Traleika Amphitheatre, and the northeastern ridge, which he also referred to as the "north ridge", together with his associate, Barrill, thus completing the first ascent of the mountain. At the Annual Dinner of the National Geographic Society in Washington D.C. in December 1906, Dr. Frederick A. Cook and Robert Edwin Peary were the guests of honor of the society and the joint recipients of its praise and tribute, Cook for his first ascent of Mt. McKinley and Peary for his Arctic Expedition of 1905-1906.

Cook's first climb to the top of Mt. McKinley was not seriously questioned until the Autumn of 1909, when the achievement was denied by Peary advocates during the North Pole Controversy which erupted at that time. Dr. Cook's Mt. McKinley climb was challenged then because his adversaries in the North Pole Controversy believed that if he could be successfully represented as having falsely claimed to have climbed Mt. McKinley, the public would be less likely to accept his claim to have discovered the North Pole. Logically, of course, there is no connection between the two exploits. If there is very substantial evidence to support his Discovery of the North Pole, wholly independent and apart from his own naked assertion that he first attained that point on the globe, as there is in abundance, then the Mt. McKinley claim, whether true or false, in no way affects his claim to the Discovery of the North Pole. Since the Autumn of 1909, the anti-Cook faction has asserted that Dr. Cook did not climb Mt. McKinley and that his claim was a lie. In fact, it has never been "proven" that Dr. Cook did not climb Mt. McKinley. Beginning with Belmore Browne and Hershel Parker, continuing with the Rev. Hudson Stuck and culminating with Bradford Washburn, a great deal of effort has gone into the attempt to disprove Cook's climb in September, 1906. Bradford Washburn is one of the reigning authorities on Mt. McKinley, has climbed it several times himself and, unquestionably, does not believe that Cook made the climb. He, building on the work of Belmore Browne and Hershel Parker in the years 1910-1913, has raised serious questions and these questions may well raise legitimate doubt in the mind of an interested observer. But neither Washburn nor his predecessor, Browne, has produced evidence which proves that Cook did not, in fact, ascend Mt. McKinley as he claimed to have done and their data, mainly photographic, while negative in tone, is in no sense determinative. There is a considerable body of evidence which supports Dr. Cook's first ascent, consisting mainly of his original accurate descriptions along the route he took to the top of the mountain, descriptions which cannot simply be shrugged off as having been conjured up from his memories of views he had of the mountain from 35 miles away during his earlier expedition in 1903. Upon his return from his conquest of Mt. McKinley in September 1906, Dr. Cook gave very specific descriptions of features found at the higher elevations and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to account for his knowing these landmarks with such exactitude without conceding that he climbed the mountain to its ultimate peak. For example, he stated in 1906 that the two peaks which grace the top of Mt. McKinley, North Peak and South Peak, which is the higher of the two and the true summit, were approximately two miles apart, towering above the median glacier, now known as Harper Glacier. For many years, it was believed that the distance between these two peaks was four miles; modern surveys have shown them to be, in fact, two miles apart. Cook was correct. If Cook went no further up

Ruth Glacier towards Mt. McKinley in September 1906 than his critics contend, he could not possibly have ascertained this fact. After his descent from Mt. McKinley in September 1906, Cook also gave an accurate description of the gradual rise of the floor of Harper Glacier from its outfall down the eastern slopes of the mountain at 15,000 feet westerly to the foot of South Peak at approximately 18,400 feet and of the condition of the surface of the glacier. Lastly, he gave the elevation of the top of South Peak, true summit of Mt. McKinley, as 20,390 feet, almost precisely the correct figure. The elevation of the summit of Mt. McKinley, according to modern surveys, is 20,320 feet. And there are many other features of the mountain which were correctly described by Dr. Cook, all strongly indicating that he did indeed ascend Mt. McKinley in September 1906.

The situation today may best be summarized as follows:

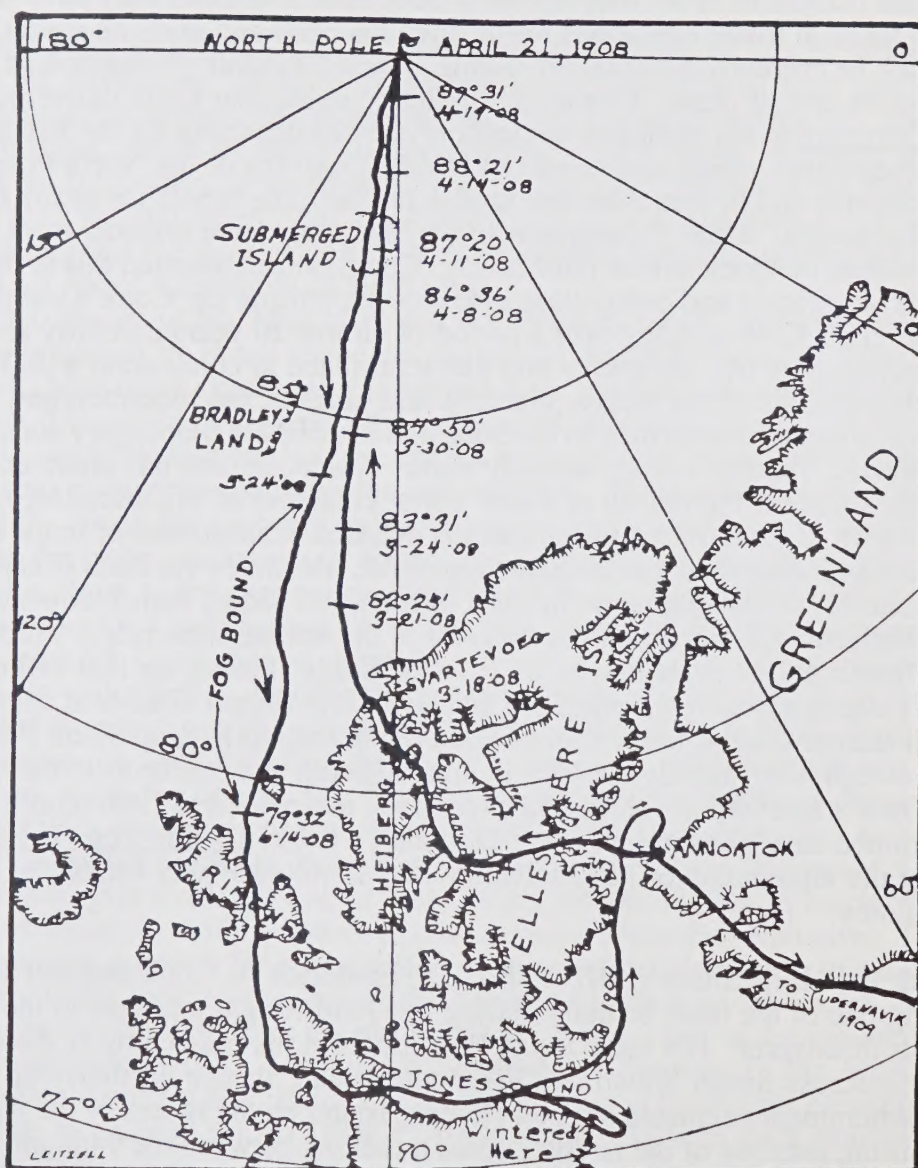
There is a substantial and persuasive array of evidence which supports Dr. Cook's claim to have made the first ascent of Mt. McKinley but certain evidence, primarily photographic, has been brought forward which, at first blush, seems to throw doubt upon his achievement. But there may be explanations for the photographs in question which are entirely consistent with Cook's having actually scaled Mt. McKinley as he claimed to have done: some of the photographs taken at the highest elevations, in bitter cold, because of the primitive state of the camera in 1906, may not have been clear and Cook may have substituted photographs of similar features taken at lower elevations to illustrate his book and give the reader a visual impression of the landmarks which he correctly described in words. Cook's famous photograph of the top of Mt. McKinley may or may not be one of these. Further, it should be noted that Cook delivered his manuscript of To The Top Of The Continent to his publisher immediately before departing for the Arctic on his last expedition in July 1907, the expedition which was climaxed by his discovery of the North Pole. This book was published during his absence and he was therefore unable to check the proofs for errors before publication. Erroneous captions for several of the photographs in his book may have resulted from the fact that he had no opportunity to proofread the book before publication. Cook, in fact, asserted this to have been the case.

Thus, there is significant and compelling evidence supporting Dr. Cook's climb and no determinative negative evidence. Hans C. Waale has over a period of almost 20 years carefully and exhaustively studied Dr. Cook's claimed route up Mt. McKinley and has scrutinized in connection with his study topographical maps and aerial photographs of the ridges, glaciers, and cliffs of the mountain and its vicinity and he has concluded that Cook's route as described in his book and his diary is thoroughly consistent with the features of Mt. McKinley and its vicinity as they actually exist. Waale, in fact, has amassed a vast amount of new data which strongly supports the reality of Cook's first conquest of Mt. McKinley. Waale's painstaking analysis of Cook's own account of his climb and his detailed examination of maps and aerial photographs clearly indicate that Cook described a route to the top of Mt. McKinley via Ruth Glacier; a connecting glacial tributary into Traleika Amphitheatre; up to the crest of Karsten's Ridge; thence down the northwestern side of that ridge; across Muldrow Glacier and up to the crest of the northeastern ridge, which Cook also called the "north ridge" or "north arête", now known as Pioneer Ridge; thence up that ridge to the North Face of McKinley; thence easterly across the North Face and down into Harper Glacier at approximately 15,000 feet; thence westerly up Harper Glacier to the foot of South Peak and, finally, up South Peak to the summit. This represents a climb which is apparently feasible, though difficult, and conforms to the configuration of the territory involved. Cook's splendid physique and experience in September 1906 render the feat quite practicable for him. Continued careful examination of Dr. Cook's book, To The Top Of The Continent, his diary and examination of the topography of Mt. McKinley may eventually fully establish Cook's claim to the first ascent of Mt. McKinley.

6. The North Pole Expedition (1907-1909). Dr. Frederick A. Cook reached the North Pole on April 21, 1908, climaxing one of the most brilliant, daring and hard-fought journeys in the history of exploration, and thus became its discoverer. His route to the Pole lay from his base camp at Annoatok, in northwestern Greenland, westerly across Smith Sound and Ellesmere Island, thence northerly up Nansen Strait to Cape Svartevoeg, the northernmost peninsula of Axel Heiberg Island on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, and thence north across the drifting pack ice of the Arctic Ocean, travelling between the 94th and 97th degrees of Longitude West, to the North Pole.

Cook left Annoatok, northwestern Greenland, at the first glimmering of the coming Arctic dawn, on February 19, 1908, leading an expedition consisting of eleven men, all Eskimos except himself and Rudolph Francke, and eleven sledges pulled by 103 dogs. On the segment of his Polar march from Cape Svartevoeg, now Cape Stallworthy, to the Pole, he was accompanied by two Eskimos, Etukishook and Ahwelah, and

drove two streamlined sledges of his own design and construction, drawn by 26 dogs. His sledges were laden with over 900 pounds of pemmican and other foodstuffs, sufficient to sustain life on the pack for 80 days at full rations and many days longer at half rations, which in the event became their lot because of delays on the return. He left Cape Svartevoeg, which is 520 geographical miles south of the Pole, and headed north across the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean for his ultimate destination on March 18, 1908. He arrived at the North Pole shortly before noon on April 21, 1908, completed seven sets of astronomical observations during the following 36 hours to fix his position at the Pole, found there only a deep sea covered by pack ice in continuous movement and turbulence, observed natural conditions about him, and departed the Pole for Cape Svartevoeg at midnight April 22/23, 1908, marching south along the 100th degree of Longitude West in order to counteract the effect of an easterly drift encountered while marching north. Below the 84th degree of Latitude North, to his dismay, he found himself caught in the powerful grip of a strong southwesterly drift in the Arctic Ocean which carried him south and west away from his intended landfall at Cape Svartevoeg. Eventually, after marching 3 further weeks across the moving pack in dense fog, his food supplies almost exhausted, he came ashore on a small island in Hassell Sound about 150 miles south and west of Cape Svartevoeg on June 14, 1908. The serious delay caused by his encounter with the unexpected southwesterly current in the Arctic Ocean almost had fatal results.



MAP SHOWING DR. COOK'S ROUTE FROM ANNOATOK, GREENLAND TO THE NORTH POLE AND RETURN. FEBRUARY 19, 1908 - APRIL 15, 1909

Because of the onset of Summer and the resultant melting of the pack ice in this latitude, Cook was unable to sledge northeast to Cape Svartevoeg, replenish his supplies from depots which he had laid there, and return to Annoatok by his outward path; he was compelled to complete his homeward journey by a long and circuitous route south through the Queen Elizabeth Islands, easterly along the northern coast of Devon Island, where he spent the winter with his Eskimo companions at Cape Sparbo on Jones Sound, resuming his march northerly in February 1909 along the eastern coast of Ellesmere Island, finally turning east and crossing Smith Sound to Annoatok. From June 14, 1908, when he came ashore on an island in Hassell Sound, throughout the following 10 months, he was dependant for food upon the game of the region which he was able to kill with improvised weapons: Polar bear, musk oxen, seal, and Arctic fowl. Cook arrived at his base camp on April 15, 1909, fourteen months after his departure, emaciated, exhausted and on the point of physical collapse, his hair hanging below his shoulders, his face blackened and its flesh hardened by exposure, and his body encrusted with filth. He had completed a sledge journey of over 3,000 route miles, one of the longest in the annals of Arctic exploration. In attaining the North Pole and returning to civilization to give the world its first account of conditions there, Dr. Frederick A. Cook had accomplished one of the most magnificent feats of courage, endurance and indefatigability in the history of exploration.

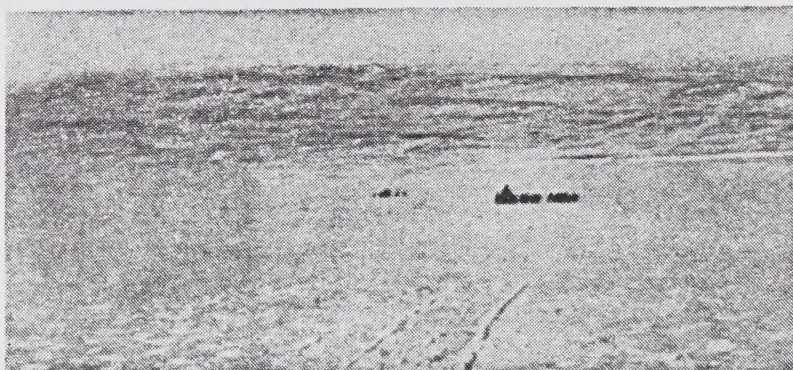


BRADLEY LAND DISCOVERED. SIGHTED BY DR. COOK IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN
AT 84° 50' NORTH LATITUDE AND 95° 36' WEST LONGITUDE ON MARCH 30, 1908,
ALMOST CERTAINLY A LARGE ICE ISLAND.

Among the older body of evidence supporting Dr. Cook's claim, one of the strongest and most interesting items is the testimony of the members of the tribe of North Greenland Eskimos to whom Dr. Cook's two Eskimo companions belonged before Knud Rasmussen, Danish explorer and anthropologist, in the Summer of 1909. This testimony was given after Dr. Cook had left North Greenland and before Peary had returned to North Greenland from Cape Sheridan. Neither Cook nor Peary was present; no suggestion, influence or coercion was brought to bear. These Eskimos gave an account of Dr. Cook's expedition to the North Pole, his arrival there, and the return to Greenland which entirely coincided with Cook's own account given to Rasmussen in South Greenland weeks before. They spoke freely and in a straight-forward manner. Rasmussen, who was partially of Eskimo ancestry and perfectly understood their speech, regarded their testimony as strong confirmation of Cook. He took down their evidence in writing, translated it into English, and sent their testimony to the New York Times, which published it in October 1909.

Knud Rasmussen adduced his evidence from the Eskimos at a time when a Danish governmental mission was present among them. Rasmussen informed the members of this Danish Party of the Eskimos' testimony. Cook sailed with this Danish party from Greenland to Copenhagen aboard the Danish vessel "Hans Egede" several weeks after the Eskimo testimony was elicited. Aboard ship, the Danish scientists and government officials discussed Cook's North Pole Expedition at length with him. When the "Hans Egede" reached Lerwick in the Shetland Islands on September 1, 1909, Inspector General Jens Daugaard-Jensen sent an official cable to the Danish Government:

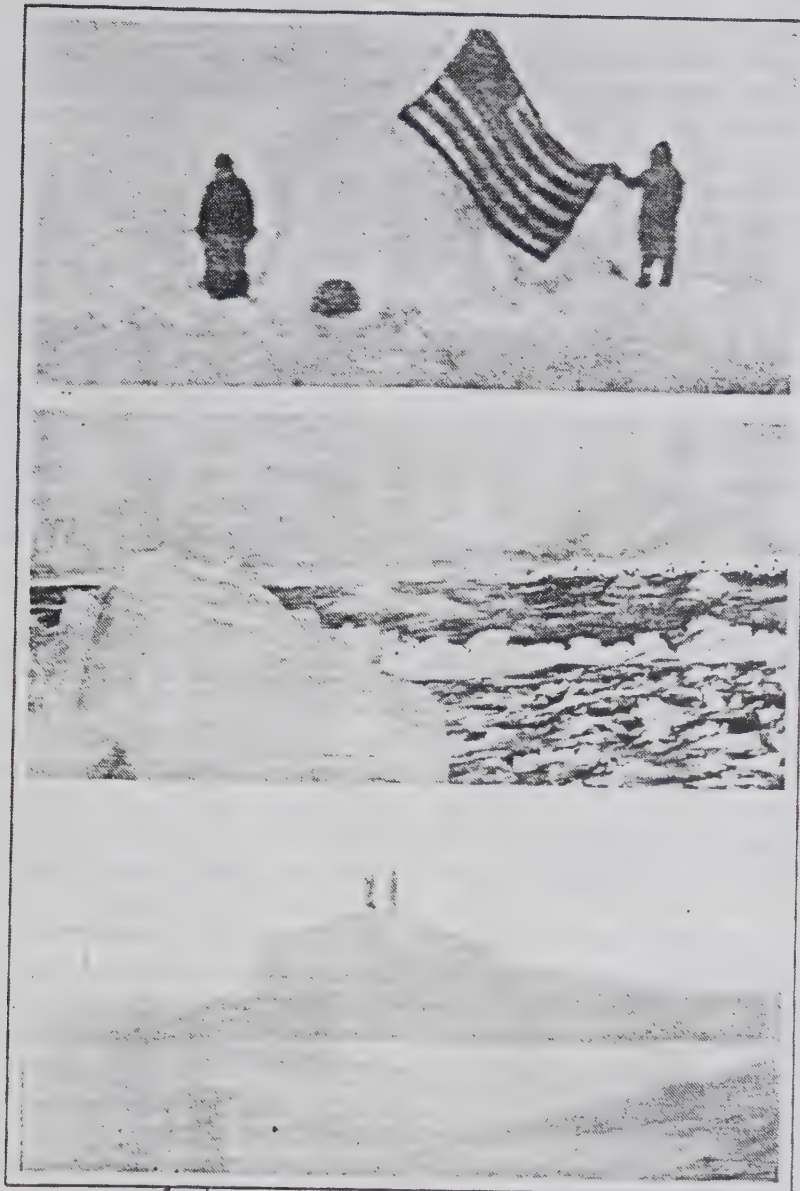
"Dr. Cook reached the North Pole April 21, 1908. Arrived May 1909 at Upernivik from Cape York. The Cape Yorkers confirm to Knud Rasmussen the voyage of Cook".



ISLAND OF OLD, GLACIAL LAND ICE DISCOVERED AND TRAVERSED BY DR. COOK ON APRIL 12 AND 13, 1908, IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN BETWEEN 87° AND 88° NORTH LATITUDE, AND AT APPROXIMATELY 95° WEST LONGITUDE

Dr. Cook himself disembarked and deposited with the cable office at Lerwick a message 2000 words in length for the New York Herald announcing his attainment of the North Pole. The announcement of his discovery of the North Pole, with his original descriptions of that area, was printed in the New York Herald on September 2, 1909 and was known throughout the civilized world within 24 hours thereafter. He also notified the International Bureau of Polar Research in Brussels, Belgium of the successful culmination of his North Pole Expedition.

Upon his arrival in Copenhagen in September 1909 on his return from his North Pole Expedition, Dr. Cook was closely and exhaustively questioned by Dr. Torp, Rector of the University of Copenhagen, Prof. Elis Stromgren, an astronomer and member of the faculty of the University, Professor Olafsen, Secretary of the Royal Danish Geographical Society, Commander Hovgaard, an Arctic explorer, and other distinguished and learned Danes. Dr. Cook's astronomical observations for the determination of location on the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean and particularly at the North Pole were matters of special interest to these eminent men. After a lengthy examination of Dr. Cook, they pronounced themselves thoroughly satisfied with regard to Cook's observations and his proficiency in the use of the sextant. As a result of these extensive interrogations and Cook's full and unhesitating responses to them, the University of Copenhagen, with the approval of King Frederick VIII of Denmark, conferred upon Cook its Doctor of Philosophy degree in recognition of his discovery of the North Pole. Shortly afterward, the Royal Danish Geographical Society awarded him its Gold Medal in acknowledgement of his achievement. The great Norwegian Arctic explorers, Otto Sverdrup and Roald Amundsen, later discoverer of the South Pole, rushed to Copenhagen to join the Danes in congratulating and commending Dr. Cook for accomplishing the first attainment of the North Pole.



AT THE NORTH POLE- "WE WERE THE ONLY PULSATING CREATURES IN A
DEAD WORLD OF ICE".

The work of explorers, geographers, glaciologists, cartographers and oceanographers in the High Arctic during the last fifty years has verified Dr. Cook's first descriptions of natural phenomena in the North Pole Region and has thus provided final confirmation of his achievement. As examples:

(a) Dr. Cook's route to the North Pole lay westward across Ellesmere Island to Eureka Strait and thence up Nansen Strait to Cape Svartegoe (now Stallworthy), the northernmost peninsula of Axel Heiberg Island, and thence north across the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean to the Pole. As he sledged northward up Nansen Strait, which separates Axel Heiberg Island on the west and Ellesmere Island on the east, he encountered Schei, which had been discovered by the great Norwegian explorer Otto Sverdrup several years before, and been identified and mapped by him as an island. Sverdrup's work was magnificent; he discovered the

islands of the Sverdrup Group, and made good preliminary maps. He thought that Schei was an island and so identified it on his maps which became available several years before Cook left on his last Arctic expedition in July 1907. Cook discovered that Schei was a peninsula and so described it. Cook did not make his announcement with great fanfare; it is merely noted in his book, which is drawn from his notes and diary. Modern detailed exploration and mapping have shown that Schei is, indeed, a peninsula. Cook was correct.

(b) The point of land from which Cook launched his march north across the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean was Cape Svartevoeg, now known as Cape Stallworthy, the northernmost peninsula of Axel Heiberg Island. Cook took photographs of Cape Svartevoeg while he was encamped there in March 1908, and a photograph of Svartevoeg is included in his book, *My Attainment of the Pole*, published two years after his return from the Pole. The headland in his photograph has been identified by later explorers as unquestionably Svartevoeg; furthermore, the photograph in his book shows his own streamlined sledges at the foot of the headland on the pack ice. Further, his description of Svartevoeg has been found to be correct in every detail. He left caches of provisions here to be picked up on the return from the Pole. (MacMillan verified, perhaps unhappily, the existence of these caches during his Crocker Land Expedition, but was careful not to expand upon the implications.)

(c) Cook reported that from the point where the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean joined the land at Cape Svartevoeg north for a distance of approximately 50 miles, the pressure of the land against the ice had thrown up huge, jumbled mountains of ice. At 82 degrees 23 minutes North, he observed that he had passed beyond the zone of ice disturbed by land pressure. He also observed that beyond 82 degrees 23 minutes North, the familiar pinnacles of very large icebergs were no longer seen. This is a correct description of the condition of the pack ice from land out for 63 miles or so and Cook's description of the pack ice cover of the Arctic Ocean at this latitude and longitude have been verified.

(d) Cook reported that he reached the Big Lead at a point 115 geographical miles north of Cape Svartevoeg. Modern exploration has determined that the continental shelf drops off sharply at this point and the Big Lead is, in fact, located there.

It is interesting to note that Cook reported that the pack ice from a point approximately 60 miles north of Cape Svartevoeg to the Big Lead was marked by huge pressure ridges and numerous small bergs which were grounded and anchored.

"The sea, as is thereby determined, is very shallow for a long distance from land." (*My Attainment of the Pole*, 3rd edition, page 213). Modern exploration and cartography have shown that Cook was precisely correct.

(e) Crocker Land. North of the Big Lead, Cook began looking for Crocker Land, which Peary had reported that he had seen in 1906. At the position reported by Peary and in its vicinity, Cook reported that he did not see Crocker Land. He was correct, of course, as Crocker Land does not exist. (Is it likely that the fabricator of a great North Pole hoax, conjuring up his imagined journey from the relatively safe and peaceful shores of western Axel Heiberg Island, would have missed the opportunity to remark that he had seen Crocker Land in the distance, particularly if the fabricator were as incompetent and bumbling as the Peary followers habitually depicted Cook?)

(f) As Cook sledged north across the pack ice of the Arctic Sea, he saw to the west of his line of march between 84 degrees and 85 degrees North Latitude a low, ice-clad island. He did not touch this island at any point but merely saw it from a distance. He naturally assumed it to be an ordinary island of terra firma. Since there was little disruption of the ice visible between his line of march and the island, he believed it to be at a distance beyond the influence of land pressure - about 40 or 50 miles. He then calculated its probable size and elevation. He photographed this island and named it Bradley Land, after a benefactor. Modern knowledge of the higher Arctic Ocean in the region between the Queen Elizabeth Islands and the North Pole indicates virtually without question that Bradley Land was an ice island. Ice islands are large bodies of old, glacial land ice which have calved from the glaciers of Ellesmere Island, fallen into the Arctic Ocean, and become caught in its prevailing currents. At the time Cook went North in 1907, these were unknown. They were re-discovered by pilots of the U.S. Army Air Force immediately after the Second World War and have since been visited and carefully studied by explorers and glaciologists. When Cook saw Bradley Land from a distance, he naturally concluded that it was an ice-sheathed island of solid earth and made his calculations accordingly. Knowledgeable glaciologists in recent times have identified Bradley Land as depicted in Cook's photograph as almost certainly an ice island. An enlargement of his photograph shows this very clearly. Bradley Land was almost unquestionably an ice island much closer to Cook's line of march than he assumed it to be and thus much smaller in mass than he estimated. Furthermore, during the late 1940's and 1950's, the drift of the ice islands in the Arctic was plotted and patterns of drift established. Cook's Bradley Land lies within the drift pattern of one of the ice islands. Bradley Land existed, almost without a doubt; it was an

island of glacial ice, adrift in the Arctic Ocean. Cook was the discoverer of these phenomena of the higher Arctic.

(g) As he continued marching north towards the Pole across the pack, Cook directly encountered an island of old, glacial land ice between the 87th degree and 88th degree of Latitude North, only 135 miles from the North Pole, surrounded by endless fields of sea ice. He was about 350 miles out from land when he came upon this "glacial ice island" on April 12 and 13, 1908. He traveled over it for portions of these two days and clearly described it. Dr. Cook was astonished to discover this island of ancient glacial ice so many hundreds of miles from land but it was there and he gave a full account of its physical characteristics. He melted the ice and determined that it was not salty. He wondered if this island of old glacial land ice might not rest upon a terrestrial island just below sea-level; the surface of the ice-island itself was at sea-level. Thus originated his use of the words "submerged island of the Polar Sea" as a possible explanation for the existence of this glacial ice island so far north in the Arctic Ocean. Geographer and Polar historian J. Gordon Hayes, of Cambridge University, England, in the late 1920's contended that proof of the existence of Cook's glacial ice island between 87 degrees and 88 degrees North and of the existence of Bradley Land would be confirmation of Cook's claim to the Discovery of the North Pole. This was also the view of American historical geographer Edwin Swift Balch and of the serious and exhaustive student of the question of The Discovery of the North Pole, Captain Thomas Hall, an experienced navigator. The rediscovery in modern times of drifting islands of old glacial ice in the region of the higher Arctic through which Cook travelled has confirmed the existence of these phenomena, first described by Cook upon his return from the Arctic in September 1909. And very specifically, the location assigned this island of old, glacial land ice by Cook lies within the drift pattern of at least one ice island and virtually within the drift pattern of another as established in the 1940's and 1950's. Again, Cook was correct concerning a feature of the Arctic Ocean in close proximity to the North Pole, unknown and unsuspected when he left for the Arctic in 1907.

(h) At the North Pole, Cook reported only sea covered by a thick crust of ice in constant movement and upheaval - no land. This is a correct description and was, of course, the first given to the world. He also observed that the prevailing current at the Pole was from across the Pole towards Greenland; he accurately described the Trans-Polar Drift, which was first verified by the Papanin Expedition in 1937. He also commented that the drift was stronger at the Pole itself than at 2 or 3 degrees of Latitude south of the Pole along and in the vicinity of the 97th degree of Longitude West. Modern exploration has determined that this is correct. Further, his descriptions of the condition of the pack ice at the Pole itself - fewer pressure ridges and generally not so large as south of the 88th degree - have been corroborated by modern exploration. Cook's account of natural conditions at the North Pole, the first announced to the world, accurately pointed out that the pack ice at and near the Pole is less irregular and uneven than further south. This, of course, permitted higher speeds to be sustained across the pack in that area than would otherwise have been possible. His reported speeds in the vicinity of the North Pole, while quite good, were nevertheless feasible, averaging about 14 miles a day.

(i) On his march north from Cape Svartevoeg to the Pole, between the 94th and 97th Meridians West, Dr. Cook observed that the drift was easterly except in close proximity to the Pole itself where it was, speaking non-technically, southeasterly. In order to counteract the effect of the easterly drift encountered marching north, Dr. Cook decided to return south to Cape Svartevoeg along the 100th degree of Longitude West. As he had expected, the drift was indeed easterly from the Pole as far south as the 84th degree of Latitude. Shortly after reaching this point on May 24, 1908, he became caught unexpectedly in the grip of a strong, southwesterly drift which carried him further and further away from his intended destination and caused him to come ashore on a small island in Hassell Sound, many miles south and west of Cape Svartevoeg. This southwesterly drift began just south of the 84th degree of Latitude North and at approximately the 97th degree of Longitude West, Cook observed. At the time Cook reported a strong southwesterly drift in this region of the Arctic Ocean, other explorers had not entered this region; this drift was entirely unknown. However, prevailing drifts north of Greenland and Ellesmere Island reported by Peary in 1905-1906 and experienced by Cook himself north of Axel Heiberg Island had been easterly; a southwesterly drift was both unknown and unexpected. Cook reported this drift and later exploration and oceanography have confirmed it. The great southwesterly drift just south of the 84th degree of Latitude North at approximately the 97th degree of Longitude West is now known as the southeastern segment of the Western Arctic Gyre. Again, modern exploration and oceanography have verified an absolutely original description of natural conditions in the upper reaches of the Arctic made by Dr. Cook and reported by him to the world in September 1909 and in more detail in his book, My Attainment of the Pole, in 1911. Again, Cook was first and Cook was correct.

(j) In My Attainment of the Pole, Cook reported that beginning south of the Big Lead and continuing north to a point above the 87th degree of Latitude North, the Arctic pack was marked by huge pressure

ridges, sometimes of great height, which constituted formidable obstacles to his progress. These pressure ridges slowed the momentum of his march because he found it necessary in some cases to sledge great distances to the east or west in order to find a way around them and, in other cases, to chop and climb his way over them. These large pressure ridges, he observed, were a characteristic feature of the pack in those latitudes. However, he noted that beginning above the 87th degree of Latitude North, the pressure ridges were smaller than further south and that above the 88th degree this condition became even more marked. As he approached the Pole, he found that the surface of the pack was much less irregular than below the 88th degree and he was able to maintain a good speed over relatively level stretches for sustained periods. At the North Pole, Cook reported that the condition of the pack was essentially the same as it had been since leaving the 88th degree; there were fewer pressure ridges than south of the 88th degree and they were generally of smaller size than further south. Cook's photographs taken at the Pole document this. Modern exploration of the Arctic and the study and evaluation of the data resulting from this exploration have verified and confirmed Cook's description of the pack ice in the region through which he traveled. Pressure ridges north of the 88th degree and at the Pole are generally smaller than further south and the surface of the pack from the 88th degree of Latitude North to the Pole is less irregular than south of the 88th degree. Cook was correct. Cook could not have surmised this from the reports of his predecessors on the Arctic pack. Nansen, at his furthest north at 86 degrees 14 minutes North, had climbed the tallest pressure ridge in the vicinity of his camp and reported that, looking north from this point, immense pressure ridges and hummocks stretched away, apparently endlessly, to the north. Above 86 degrees 14 minutes North, the condition of the pack appeared to Nansen to be exactly as it had been since he had left the "Fram" weeks before and he turned back. Captain Cagni of the Duke of the Abruzzi's expedition gave the same report from his furthest north at 86 degrees 35 minutes North; he saw no improvement in the condition of the pack to the north of the point of his furthest advance. Peary reported in 1906 that, looking north from his furthest north at 87 degrees 6 minutes north, the pack was covered with huge pressure ridges and hummocks as far as he could see, precisely as it was south of that point.

Cook's correct description of the condition of the pack ice in the upper reaches of the Arctic in the region through which he travelled and at the North Pole itself is evidence of very great weight indeed that he attained the North Pole in April 1908, and this is particularly true since his account of conditions north of 88 degrees North Latitude was contrary to what he would have been led to expect those conditions to be from the reports of the great explorers who had immediately preceded him northward over the pack.

(k) The Trans-Polar Drift and the Western Arctic Gyre

It is also a fact of the greatest significance that on his return from the Pole, Cook reported that immediately south of the 84th degree of Latitude North and approximately on the 97th meridian West he had encountered, suddenly and most unexpectedly, a strong southwesterly drift which had carried him rapidly to the south and west away from his intended route of return. He was caught in the grip of this drift for ten days to two weeks, all the while enshrouded in thick, impenetrable fog. He described very vividly the great jumbled masses of ice along the southeastern edge of this current -- masses of crushed ice over which he was eventually able to pass. By the time he broke free of this drift, it had carried him far to the south and west of the point he had expected to reach by that late date in the Polar sledging season. He was therefore compelled to make his landfall on an island in Hassell Sound, over 150 miles south and west of Cape Svartevoeg, where he had laid caches of provisions for the remainder of his return journey to Annoatok.

At the time Cook went North in 1907, the currents which had been reported north of Greeland and Ellesmere Island, gleaned from Peary's accounts of his 1898-1902 and 1905-1906 expeditions, were easterly. No southwesterly drift in the area through which Cook's return march lay was known, projected, or anticipated. Cook himself had encountered an easterly drift on his northward march to the Pole which lay to the east of his return route. On his northward march from the 88th degree of Latitude North to the Pole, generally along the 97th Meridian West, Cook had found the drift to be southeasterly. At the Pole itself, he had reported that the drift was from across the Pole toward Greenland. In modern times, his account of the drift across the Pole and of a southeasterly drift in the vicinity of the North Pole along the 97th degree of Longitude West has been verified; he correctly described the Trans-Polar Drift. His march back to land was somewhat west of his northward progress and, although he felt the effect of the easterly drift in the area between the 100th degree of Longitude West and the 97th degree of Longitude West as far south as the 84th degree of Latitude North, exactly as exploration and oceanography in modern times have indicated that he should have, he reported that, contrary to his expectations based upon Peary's and his own earlier experience, he had encountered a great southwesterly drift beginning a short distance south of the 84th degree of Latitude North in the vicinity of the 97th degree of Longitude West. The force of this great drift resulted in Cook's reaching

land to the west and south of Svartevoeg and condemned him and his Eskimo companions to a winter alone in the high Arctic. Modern exploration and oceanography have confirmed Cook's original account of this great southwesterly current in the Arctic Ocean northwest of the Queen Elizabeth Islands; it is today known as the southeastern segment of the clockwise moving Western Arctic Gyre.

The cumulative effect of the corroboration of Cook's original descriptions of natural conditions in the Arctic Ocean north and northwest of the Queen Elizabeth Islands and at the North Pole itself is staggering. He correctly reported the condition of the pack ice at various latitudes, up to and including the Pole; islands of glacial land ice; the prevailing drifts in the region of the Arctic Ocean through which he travelled; and the fact that the Arctic Ocean is very shallow for a great distance north from Cape Svartevoeg and all the way to the Big Lead, where it suddenly deepens. Cook gave to the world its first information concerning natural conditions in areas of the High Arctic which had never been seen or traversed before his historic journey to the Pole. The verification of his first descriptions of the North Polar region by modern exploration and the sciences of oceanography, glaciology, geography and cartography constitutes the proof of his Discovery of the North Pole on April 21, 1908.

Cook's Return Journey from the North Pole to Annoatok

The southern segment of Cook's return journey from the Pole, from a tiny island in Hassell Sound southerly through Penny Strait to the entrance of Wellington Channel, thence onto Devon Island, easterly to Cape Sparbo on Jones Sound, and thence north and east along Ellesmere Island's eastern coast and across Smith Sound to Annoatok, has never been questioned and is universally accepted. This southern segment of Cook's journey is consistent with a return south from the North Pole, or certainly from a point very far north in the Arctic Ocean. It is inconsistent with a return to Annoatok from a Spring and Summer sojourn along the western coast of Axel Heiberg Island as described by Peary and his associates.

According to Cook's account he set out South from the North Pole at midnight on April 22/23, 1908. Since he had experienced an easterly drift traveling north, he decided to set out on the 100th Meridian West in order to counteract this drift. His destination was Cape Svartevoeg where he had left a cache of provisions; from Svartevoeg he intended to follow his outward path to Annoatok. His observations on May 24, 1908 placed him on the 84th parallel near the 97th Meridian. He had drifted slowly eastward as he marched south. Shortly afterward, however, he became caught in the grip of a strong, southwesterly drift which carried him farther and farther away from his intended course and landfall at Svartevoeg. By the time he broke loose from the effect of this drift he was far south and west of his intended location. Persistent dense fog made observations impossible until June 13, when the sun appeared and he was able to determine that his position was 79 degrees 32 minutes North and 101 degrees 22 minutes West on the pack ice of the Crown Prince Gustav Sea. He could see Axel Heiberg Island far off to the east but he was many miles south and west of Cape Svartevoeg; he could also see Ellef Ringnes Island far away to the west and south. The ice had melted to such an extent that there were great stretches of open water and small ice between his position and Axel Heiberg Island; it was thus impossible for him to reach Axel Heiberg Island and return along his outward trek. He was therefore compelled by the force of circumstances to sledge with the prevailing current which had now become south southeasterly. It was the only hope for survival. He hoped that he might encounter whaling vessels in Lancaster Sound. In any event, he had no choice.

By one of the most extraordinary displays of resourcefulness, determination, endurance and unflagging optimism in the history of exploration, he overcame the almost insuperable circumstances presented by a bitterly cold Polar Winter, total isolation, and the almost complete depletion of his food supplies on the Arctic pack ice, survived, and completed his return to Annoatok with his two Eskimo companions, painfully pulling a half-sledge for hundreds of miles from Cape Sparbo to their ultimate destination. This segment of Cook's journey from Hassell Sound southerly through Penny Strait to the entrance of Wellington Channel, thence to Devon Island, wintering at Cape Sparbo, and the final marches north again to Annoatok is consistent with his account of a much longer return journey beginning at the Pole, a route which was forced upon him by the natural conditions he encountered while on the pack; the great southwesterly drift between approximately 84 degrees and 83 degrees North Latitude had driven him far off course and delayed his return; by the time he arrived at 79 degrees 32 minutes North Latitude and 101 degrees 22 minutes West Longitude on June 13, 1908, Summer had almost set in and the pack between his position and Axel Heiberg Island was in an advanced state of deterioration. His return route through the frozen, isolated Queen Elizabeth Islands was not taken by choice but by necessity!



DR. FREDERICK A. COOK, c. 1936.

The southern segment of Cook's return to Annoatok is inconsistent with Cook's having travelled only a short distance North on the pack from Cape Svartevoeg in March 1908 and then having retreated to Axel Heiberg Island, spending the Spring and Summer of that year along its western coast. Cook had laid depots of provisions every fifty miles along his outward march from Annoatok and had left plentiful supplies at Svartevoeg. Had Cook planned to fake a voyage to the North Pole, he certainly would not have deliberately marched away from his provisions, west and then south along the western coast of Axel Heiberg Island, then further and further south through Penny Strait to the entrance of Wellington Channel, thence to Devon Island! As Captain Thomas F. Hall observed perceptively many years ago, Cook would not have knowingly marched further and further away from his food supplies and, so far as he could know, to ultimate destitution. He would simply have waited 90 days or so on Axel Heiberg Island to lend plausibility to a false account of a Polar journey and would then have stocked up with supplies at Svartevoeg and returned to Annoatok along his outward path, replenishing his provisions at fifty mile intervals. The fact that Cook returned by the long, circuitous route from the tiny island in Hassell Sound through Penny Strait to the entrance to Wellington Channel, to Devon Island, and thence north up the east coast of Ellesmere Island is convincing evidence that he actually returned to land from a point very far north in the Arctic Ocean and followed the southern segment of this return journey to Annoatok because of the compelling force of natural conditions, not through his own choice!

Dr. V.S. Koryakin, a glaciologist and historian of Polar exploration and member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., after a profound and lengthy study of Dr. Cook's own accounts of natural conditions north of the Queen Elizabeth Islands and at the North Pole and the comparison of these accounts with the extensive data amassed by modern exploration in the Arctic, concluded in 1975 that the verification of Cook's descriptions in recent times in detail after detail has confirmed Dr. Cook's Polar journey of 1908-1909; that he went exactly where he said he went.² Dr. A. F. Treshnikov of the Arctic and Antarctic Institute of Leningrad and President of the Soviet Geographical Society, after an exhaustive analysis of Polar exploration and the modern data pertaining to natural conditions in the North Polar Region carried forward through a period encompassing more than 20 years, has come to the conclusion that Cook certainly marched very far north into the Central Arctic basin and to the immediate vicinity, at least, of the North Pole.³ These scholars thus join Dr. Frederick J. Pohl, distinguished American historian of exploration,⁴ Rear Admiral Charles W. Thomas, U. S. Coast Guard, eminent authority on the Arctic and the Antarctic,⁵ and Dr. Silvio Zavatti, Director of the Institute of Polar Geography in Civitino Marche, Italy,⁶ serious student of both Polar Regions, in extending recognition to Frederick Albert Cook, a pre-eminent figure in the history of Polar exploration and Discoverer of the North Pole.

Sheldon Cook-Dorough
Atlanta, Georgia
June 15, 1988

ENDNOTES

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3. The Arctic World. Sierra Books, 1985. Article on Polar Exploration.
4. In his Introduction to Return From The Pole, by Dr. Frederick A. Cook, 1951.
5. Ice Is Where You Find It, by Charles W. Thomas, 1951. Also, article in Newsletter of the Frederick A. Cook Society, 1985.
6. Chi Raggiunse Per Primo Il Polo Nord? (Who First Reached The North Pole?), 1957. Also in Dizionario Degli Esploratori, (The Explorers' Dictionary), 1967.
7. The photographs on pages 7, 8, and 9 are from My Attainment of The Pole, by Dr. Frederick A. Cook.

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